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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/030,988	04/12/2002	Francois Dopont	218104US0PCT	9171
22850	7590	03/22/2004	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				YOON, TAE H
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/030,988	DOPONT ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Tae H Yoon	1714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 April 2002.  
 2a) This action is **FINAL**.      2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

The recited "possibly chosen from ---" in claims 2-6, "in particular" and "such as" in claims 2, 3, 5 and 6, and "preferentially ---" in claim 8 are objected and separate claims with narrow limitation are suggested. Abstract is objected since it must be in a single paragraph.

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The recited "The use" is non-statutory subject matter, and "the method of using" is suggested.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 4-6 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 8-13 of copending Application No. 10/168,389. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the copolymer (acrylic acid and

styrene in claim 10, for example) of said application encompasses the instant copolymer and the recited preambles have little probative value.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

The recited "substituted" in claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 is non-enabling absent particular substituents or functional groups recited in the specification. Cancellation of said "substituted" is needed if the specification does not teach such substituents or functional groups.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The recited "--- that is consists of copolymers composed of in claims 1-6 is confusing and indefinite since said consists is a closed-end term and composed is open-ended term. It is unclear which one controls the recited copolymer.

The recited "chosen from amongst" is an improper Markush format and "chosen from the group consisting of A, B, C, ---- and Z" is suggested.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over EP 0 737 728.

EP teaches the instant copolymers in abstract wherein 40-60 wt% of (meth)acrylic acid, 25-45 wt% of styrene or alpha methylstyrene and 0-20 wt% of (meth)acrylate are taught. The recited simultaneous adjustment of the water retention of the coating color and its Brookfield viscosity is an inherent property since the same polymer is used. Thus, the instant invention lacks novelty.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Corbett et al (US 4,423,118).

Corbett et al teach paper coating compositions comprising a polymeric thickener in abstract. Said polymeric thickener is a terpolymer of 45-55 wt% acrylic acid, 20-30 wt% of acrylamide and 20-30 wt% of methyl methacrylate (col. 4, lines 6-8 and 40-49). Reference must be considered for all that it discloses and must not be limited to preferred embodiments or working examples, *In re Mills*, 477 F2d 649, 176 USPQ 196 (CCPA 1972). The recited simultaneous adjustment of the water retention of the coating color and its Brookfield viscosity is an inherent property since the same polymer is used. Thus, the instant invention lacks novelty.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over EP 0 737 728 and Corbett et al (US 4,423,118), Miyauchi et al (US 5,843,566) or Sinka et al (US 4,78,500).

The instant invention further recites coating of paper over EP. However, the use of the instant (meth)acrylic acid copolymers as thickeners or water retention aids for paper coatings is well known in the art as taught by Corbett et al, Miyauchi et al (examples 4-6) and Sinka et al (abstract).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of invention to utilize the coating composition of EP in coating papers with teaching of Corbett et al, Miyauchi et al or Sinka et al since EP teaches a film forming coating composition and since the use of the instant acrylic acid copolymers as thickeners or water retention aids for paper coatings is well known in the art.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tae H Yoon whose telephone number is (571) 272-1128. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on (571) 272-1119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

*Tae H Yoon*  
Tae H Yoon  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1714

THY/March 15, 2004